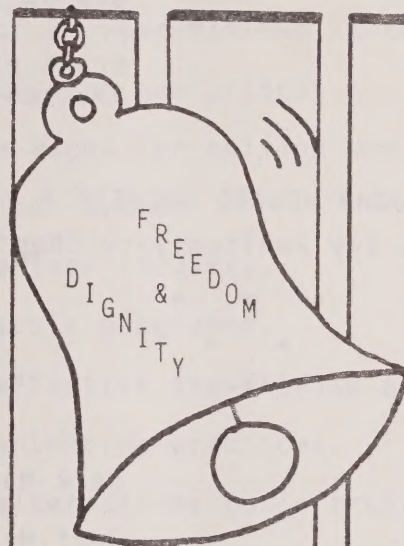


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JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

Collins Bay Chapter

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THE TOCSIN

★ ★ ★
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Editor:	BoB Doucette
Staff Writer:	Jeff McLeod
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Front Cover:	Drawn by Colin Watson Revised by The Editor

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Collins Bay Penitentiary Chapter

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Guest Co-ordinator	Rick Aitchison

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

- T O C S I N - A warning bell or signal alarm -

Articles, poems, jokes, etc., should be forwarded to:

The Editor
TOCSIN
P.O. Box 190
Kingston, Ont.
K7L 4V9

THANK YOU!

JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY

Collins Bay Chapter

Aims and Objectives

- 01 The abolishment of Mandatory Supervision.
- 02 The abolishment of all Special Handling Units.
- 03 The abolishment of 25 year minimum sentences.
- 04 Against construction of new prisons.
- 05 Decent comparable wages for skilled and unskilled labor.
- 06 A more humane prison system.
- 07 Introduction of prison industry.
- 08 A more liberal parole programme.
- 09 Introduction of effective pre-release programs.
- 10 Fair and equal sentencing practices.
- 11 Introduction of alternatives to incarceration.
- 12 To make the public aware of the realities of the Criminal Justice, Parole and Prison System(s).
- 13 To make bail a right, not a privilege.
- 14 To fight for prisoners rights.
- 15 To constantly remind everyone that we are sent to prison as punishment.....not for punishment.
- 16 To help all prisoners in whatever manner and way possible.



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' The TOCSIN '

The TOCSIN is a news phamplet published by the John Howard Society, Collins Bay Chapter. The Chapter was formed in 1977. We have regularly scheduled meetings each Thursday night. We now boast 131 members.

In effect, the TOCSIN is our voice. Our way to reach the public and present them with a prisoner's perspective; an inside view of prison and the Criminal Justice System.

This year the Chapter decided to develop a workable method of acquiring material for the TOCSIN. We formed a sub-committee and offered cash canteen prizes of \$20. and \$10. for 1st. and 2nd. place entries on articles. Also, canteen prizes of \$10. and \$5. was given to 1st. and 2nd. place entries for poetry.

The 1st. place winner for articles or short stories was Peter Desjarlais with, "Education An Alternative". Our 2nd. place winner in the same category was David Aubertin with, "The Con and The Mouse".

In the poetry category we have a submission from Rick Robinson, composed by Roseann Tremblay with, "YOU ARE ALONE" as 1st. place. John Roger's, "Guard My Children Dear Lord", taking 2nd. place.

As I was one of the selected Judges, I must admit, it was a difficult task. We had an exceptionally good response. Many other submissions were as deserving and were therefore included in this issue. I'm certain you will find some satisfactory reading.

All correspondence directed to the Editor will need to include a statement that, you do not wish to have your material published. A special thanks to Roseann and Valerie for your written contributions. I hope to be hearing from all you other readers soon....

The views expressed in the TOCSIN are not necessarily those of the Collins Bay administration, the Canadian Corrections Service, the John Howard Society of Canada or any other body of the Criminal Justice System.

BOB DOUCETTE
Editor



Our School Project Continues

By:

Rick Aitchison

It was fantastic! Yesterday, I had the privilege of going out to two local High Schools with our Chairman, Nick Malham. We went to Sydenham High School in the morning and Bayridges High School in the afternoon. Since this was my first time to ever attend a speaking event, I have to admit I was nervous.

Nick has gone out to several speaking engagements and since we all know hes not shy, I gained confidence knowing he would help me out if I became stuck for words. We even had one of Nick's escorts say a few words. Even that turned out fairly well.

Our main concern struck on the emphasis of drugs, alcohol, education and peer pressure. There are much too many kids entering these places nowadays. I am now 23 years old and I've been in since I was 18. I found it easy to identify and relate to the problems of todays youth and of those at the schools. I'm certain that if I knew then what I know now this place would never have had the pleasure of my company.

All the students showed a keen sense of interest. They treated us with the greatest of respect and as an equal. We could have spent a full day at each school, just answering their questions. All of their questions were sensible, intelligent and with an air of sincere concern.

We told of how we went wrong. How petty little things got out of hand as it goes with kids who get mixed up. I personally feel we got our point across. I sincerely hope that as a result of our efforts, we will have succeeded in keeping some of the younger generation away from the 'slippery slope of dilinquency' and keep them from ever ending up in a place such as Collins Bay.

I'll be getting out soon. I hope to stay out! I thank the John Howard of Collins Bay for helping me form a new attitude. Also a special thanks for allowing me the opportunity to participate in such a worthy project as the School Talks. It gave me a feeling of accomplishment, knowing I may have helped somebody else.

CONGLOMERATION

This is not only written but, it is being written with blood in my eyes. If I were to let my feelings direct my actions, I would undoubtedly hang in the morning.

I didn't start right in on the subject because I needed to allow time for my emotions to calm before I could even think of thinking about it.

S P A C E is the subject, not out-of-space but, breathing space.

Lets get right to the point now. O V E R CROWDING !!!

If I took a personal stand and suggested something should be done; Security action would follow in short order. It is for this reason I feel compelled to with-hold my name.

We have heard enough. We need to put a stop to it. There is a limit for everything. A limit on how long we can sleep, how much we can eat or drink and how long we can break the Law without being caught.

Shouldn't there be a limit on how many people can cram into a washroom, a walk in closet, a utility room? What do you mean few people could live in those small areas. The size of a prison cell is comparable and yet you allow the administrators of this proud Country of ours to cram two adults inside one. Never for a moment did anyone consider the degradation, humiliation and shame that one person feels in an open cell, so how could we ever expect any of you to hold any apathy for those who must be housed together.

It will only be temporary, only the new-comers and the first timers will be placed two in a cell. Just who are these people? Is it your brother or their cousin or my friend? Hardly! And hes hardly bound to be any of those to me or either of us.

So here we are, the two of us. In the morning, drowsy, I sit on the edge of the bottom bunk, not fully awake, while this total stranger in as groggy a state of mind, lets wind, swings his legs down over the top bunk and lands a heel directly on the nose. YOU F...en idiot!!! And then what? Beat him senselessly? No! They may discover who and why. I'll wait.....

That is only one example of how temperments can flair from that sort of housing.

Think of it.....you have the need to go to the toilet in the middle of the night. This other person whom your never going to take a liking to, because hes'a threat to your privacy and the little space you do have - hes not there willingly of course, yet, hes' there in any event, sitting reading a book and laughs at you groaning and turning red in the face because you happen to be constipated.

It is irrelevant they say. We could place 3 and 4 in a cell and it would make no difference in the violence now occuring. Do you believe that? Can you actually believe that? If so, you would have to be out of your mind, or you simply cannot appreciate the circumstances, or you don't care.

con't

You just don't give a f... is that right? Wouldn't you rather hang them all. No! It may solve the problem, but you need us too badly to keep the system going. Are you paid by head? By day? How sorrowful it would be to lose one. It doesn't look good! But then again it was said that they were bad. Who cares that my brother died yesterday! Isn't he better off than in your hands?

I wish to apologize for any offensive remarks in this article. I trust I will be protected under the Bill of Rights, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Expression, Freedom of the Press. Will any of this save me, or have I lost that right too?

Back to the issue and the concern at hand. OVER - CROWDING. Believe me there is a problem. Forget about rampant homosexuality. It has been accepted long ago. That was yesterday. Today it is... OVER-CROWDING.

How many have we got in this cell? Two and two more to go. Wash your feet in my face - throw your shoes on my pillow - move away from the mirror - who is smoking my cigarettes? - where did you place my book! - I had two cans of pop! - get off the can! - what time is it! - when are you getting out of here! - can I breathe now? - its my turn! - go die somewhere else!

How much more do you need? Do you get the picture yet?

The picture of OVER-CROWDING. Get it!!!

You want to change my mind!

You've got a problem!

We've got a problem!

I've got a problem!.....I CAN'T F...EN BREATHE!!

Lets get together....two feet apart.....just enough room for the next step.

P R I V A C Y..... the right to be alone. Ha! Autonomy of anatomy? Hardly! They won't even stop to having a female guard present during a strip search. Who the hell are they to be above the Law. And then they have the nerve to question the reasons for sudden bursts of violence. Humiliation, constantly being reminded that you broke the Law through this type of perverse treatment. And you expect us to act normally under these bizzarre conditions. I'm surprised!

Just think I may not be here to submit anything to the TOCSIN, for the next issue. I may be the next victim to someones momentary madness. Triggered by the need to have a little more S P A C E.

I am petrified!

THIS PLACE IS OVER-CROWDED.....OVERCROWDED.....Get it?

B.B.B.

Barely Breathing Brother

January 24, 1984

Dear Editor:

Please find enclosed a poem written by Tariq Abdur-Rahman. Tariq is on death row in Florida. Three weeks ago his death warrant was signed and his date of execution set for today. Since then, I think, hope and pray, he has been granted a "stay of execution."

I hope you can print his poem. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Elaine
Debden, Sask.

ILLUSION

Smothered dreams of love games...long over.
And opportunity's knock echoing loudly,
Off the walls of solitude.
Life's motion carries me towards...
the headwaters of despair.
I flounder in the riptides...
of wasted efforts and petty jealousies.
I lie motionless on the surface
of my nightmare...
Waiting to be devoured
by the gluttonous consumers,
of man's hopes and visions.
The ghosts of deeds left undone,
haunt my consciousness...
and dismember my fantasies.
Extended efforts towards higher goals...
fills me with the need for solace.



The battle for my life's worth rages on.
My valiant efforts are rarely rewarded.
Could it be that the struggle...is all there is?
And its accomplishment, merely an illusion?

TARIQ

BITTERNESS and HATE! WHY?

It seems that everywhere we look today we see violence. We see it on television, at the movies, on the streets, in the homes, in every country and even in sports. The violence I want to speak about and haven't mentioned, is the violence within the prisons.

I'm no expert but I consider myself to be a perceptive person. I have been in the Federal Prison System for nearly three years. This being my first visit to any kind of prison has been shocking.

There has always been some underlying reason for violence, at least I have found this to be so, unless of course, some person is a sadistic individual who enjoys inflicting pain on others for no particular reason. The latter of the two are few and far between. So at that, we can conclude, like everything else in life, there is a reason.

I am a beginner in this system. I'm sure there are many others who have been around much longer than I, who could elaborate more, but since I chose to write on this topic, I will continue.

The other institute that I was residing in before this establishment, was Warkworth. I must admit there wasn't much violence there. I think that is because there obviously is more to do and definitely more freedom of movement. I might add that the majority of the clientele there would tell your life story if they were asked. (It seems that many of the inmates feel that their parole chances are increased if they tell stories, whether they are true or not.) Anyway, I am getting off track. This article isn't to tell about Warkworth being a Mickey Mouse joint. But, before I go on I must state that not all prisoners at Warkworth are hard to distinguish between the staff.

Why is there so much violence within the prisons? I've heard a variety of answers to this question. It seems that most of society will state that we are all cold blooded killers. I've even heard a representative of the C.S.C. state those exact words and added that the violence within these places is our fault. You never hear them give a prisoners opinion of the situation. I'd never be gullible enough, even for one minute, to actually believe that, the average citizen in our society would believe anything we have to say. I've learned that until people have direct contact with prisoners, they continue to believe all that they read. (It would be nice if we could march 25 million Canadians through our weekly Thursday night meetings. Just so they could meet us and then maybe they would realize that we are human also.)

I'll state my own personal opinion on why there is so much prison violence. To start with, I'll ask if you could live with the likes of Clifford Olsen? No! I didn't think so. Don't get me wrong. That sorry sight is not here! Lucky for him!! I'm just establishing a hypothetical situation. We live in a small enclosed world of our own where we can't get away from some of these sickies. I say sick because I can't associate them with the average crook or criminal. They belong in hospitals, not prisons. It used to be that persons of this category were sent to protective custody, such as Kingston Penitentiary. Now the prisons are so over-crowded, they slip them into different prisons and hope that others won't learn who they are or what their charges are.

con't

Rats, (informers) didlers, (child molesters) the likes of Olsons and so on, should not be among the fraud man, drug dealer or bank robber. There is a distinct difference between a dishonest person & the perverts.

Does the system try to aggravate a situation? Do they try to provoke violence so they can collect overtime pay? I remember the Kingston riot. I read the paper and I spoke to many who went to Millhaven. In total the guards collected \$15,000,000 in overtime. No wonder they harassed and tormented the prisoners for so long. M O N E Y! They even gave many of their own hassles. Those who were slightly more sympathetic to the prisoner. This is another story in itself. I'll go on but I hope you get my point. I might add before I go on that, after all this trouble at Millhaven, they had a special committee investigate the situation. It was suggested at that time that certain parties working for the institution should be fired. Guess what! Some of them received promotions.

Here at Collins Bay we have a lot of useless violence. When I think back to when I first came here, I realize it is quite difficult to avoid. To start with we have too many people in too small an area, and too few things to occupy our time. I was surprised to find that this is the only institution in Ontario that does not have night yard exercise. To keep such a large population in a small enclosed area is bound to cause problems. Imagine seeing the same faces, day after day, including those who you don't care for. The biggest argument comes from this stupid concept of DOUBLE-BUNKING. Your only chance of any kind of privacy is stripped away. If I were married, I might go for this double-bunking crap. If it was my wife they double-bunked me with of course. Since there isn't a single prisoner in here that appeals to me, I sure as hell would not want to spend my time in the same cell as any one of them. It goes without mentioning that these cells were designed for only one person. (There isn't enough room for one person in my opinion.) Can you imagine how the people feel that are double-bunked? Would you consider this CRUEL and UNUSUAL punishment?

con't



BITTERNESS AND HATE ?

Now my favourite! Head games! Sounds like a game you might put out on the open market. You know how some games drive you crazy, well the one I speak of is intended to do just that. People who are waiting for paroles and are refused, yet, they have done all possible to earn one. A wife, a friend, or loved one comes up to visit you and they are turned away after driving hundreds of miles simply because they were once charged with some trivial matter. Or, waiting to see your Classification Officer for weeks on end. No canteen because of mistakes with finance. Insulted by a staff member. Something missing out of your cell. Noise! Flashlight directed on your face when your trying to sleep or just fell asleep. Told to wear certain clothes with colour tags and name tags. (I guess they can't tell a prisoner from a guard in uniform) Crappy meals! Volunteers are turned away because their name wasn't seen on the list. Threats to cut off socials. I could go on and on in this area, but the message has been translated. Can you imagine how this sort of thing can build up inside? Everyone needs a way to releive frustration. I inherited a habit of keeping things inside, such as my mother did. I try to make out like nothing is bothering me. This false self-control is not good for me, mentally or physically. Maybe when I am released I will walk home to Ottawa so I can release it all.

A guy can only take so much. We all know that when you keep an animal locked up, it becomes dangerous. I also compare this situation to that of a large concert. We have all seen a large crowd in a small area go wild with violence when the band didn't show up. The same may be applied here when numerous prisoners are let down from what they were waiting for. Hopes are falsely built up so you can be shot down and they can watch the fire-works.

Violence will always be on TV, at the movies, in the homes, in the streets, in every country and even in sports. We can cut down a good portion of violence in prisons if we sat down like rational human beings and sorted the situation out.

I came in here an easy going guy with an easy going personality. Even though these places breed hate and bitterness, my only wish is to leave here with the same personality I came in with. I wouldn't want the system winning over me and making me an overly bitter person whereas they know they can save a bed for me after I'm gone. This is one HUMAN BEING that refuses to let the system fill his heart with bitterness and hate and destroy the man I am.
DESPITE THE ODDS.

(BIG) Nick
7532 Malham

A REPORT FROM ESQUIRE

What goes around, comes around. A familiar enough cliché. Esquire tells me that if you don't soon quit f...en around you'll end up buying a round. What does it all mean?

Esquire, who visits all corners of our great nation and who often even loafs around committee's where major debates are being conducted and such places where our nations Senate deliberate their own immediate and direct concerns and where the lime-light of the nation often focuses, has over heard the echelons of various political departments speak of issues that often result in heated discussion simply because some archaic tyrant or Silly Sally simply doesn't want to put an end to a firmly established trend which happened to be rooted and seated by the perpetual traditions of time.

Esquire reports having heard Wealthy Willie boldly declare: "I will not sit still and have a hand-full of environmentalists erect a new flag-pole that will make the present one which is perfectly suitable; obsolete, by mounting the pole 15 meters above the crust of the earth, rather than the traditional 50 feet. (a difference of approximately 6 inches) Our fore-fathers fought for the freedom our flag represents and I strongly oppose any change!"

Sound familiar? Well personally I think an analogy may be drawn from Esquire's report.

I was reading a pamphlet called 'TELESCOPE', a publication from Kingston Penitentiary before it became a Reception Centre and long before it established its present status of low rating. From a time where, if you were a prisoner who had served the larger portion of a sentence, you could be paroled to Collins Bay or Joyceville until such time as your sentence expired.

From this publication I learned, with the help of Esquire's recent findings that, prisoners of that time, over 2 decades ago, (the two existing copies which I've found were printed in 1960 and 1963) they were mainly concerned with a policy which imprisoned young offenders, whom they regarded as impressionable kids, with old time criminals who themselves were once impressionable kids.

Is it any wonder then that today there are over 11,000 people locked away in Canada's Penitentiaries and that's just within the Penitentiaries, not to mention provincial institutions and the many municipal jails. 11,000, compared to the 6,300 during 1960.

Today the system continues to insist on placing young offenders in confinement with people whom they themselves consider and have labeled the hardened criminal. Esquire tells me that this assures more kids will graduate in the course of crime and increase the chances of having them return so the necessary ingredients to maintain the prison industry will continue to grow.

During a 3 year period, from 1960 through to 1963, 18 prisoners were released on parole, of a population of 900, from Kingston Penitentiary. From 1960 through to 1966 there were no deaths in any of the Penitentiaries in the Kingston region.

How then does the Correction Services Canada answer to the 12 deaths which occurred in the Kingston region during the past three years. Not to mention the numerous stabbings and beatings which occur weekly. In a seven week period, 38 inmates were subject to severe beatings with pipes and make-shift weapons. Most of whom were intended to be killed and were left maimed for life.

In a newspaper article of which a spokesman for the C.S.C. commented on the over-crowding within the system, he is remembered as stating that as many as 3 and 4 could be placed in one cell & the increase of prison violence could not be accountable to over-crowding in the least of way.

Esquire says, people who think in those terms should be banished from the world he advocates. He finds such a person to be a typical example of an archaic tyrant who assumes that what he dictates is in the absolute interest of all mankind. From what did this moron have the audacity to assume such a perverse, contemptuous connotation.

Esquire remembers a period of time when GOOD TIME was good time. Earned remission could not be tampered with by any court in the country. Statutory remission earned you a parole without all the technical loop-holes which allow a Parole Board to "gate" a person upon release.

There seems no changing the minds of the policy makers. Just as Wealthy Willie stood his ground on the slightest change in the height of a flag-pole; so do the C.S.C. turn a blind eye and deaf ear on the real cause of prison violence and the recidivism rate.

OVER CROWDING AND THE LOSS OF INCENTIVES

NORTH WEST WIND ESQUIRE

-
" MY DARLING "

by:

John J. Rogers

Though miles are between us
And our lives are drawn apart
My thoughts are always of you
Tugging softly at my heart.

This loneliness without you
Tells of special moments shared
And says across the many miles
Just how much I've always cared.

The emptiness that always comes
With just the memory of your touch
Stirs a feeling that always says
I really miss you very much.



YOU ARE ALONE

by: Roseann
Tremblay

Darkness falls like a sheet of fog
Lights go out like a wind to a match
Chills set in as the steel doors clang shut
THATS PRISON.....

Silence. You can hear many other people
Your still totally alone
THATS PRISON.....

Your whole body sweats
Fright keeps you eyes open and alert
You always keep your back to a wall
THATS PRISON.....

You pray to a God you never had
You mumble out loud
Your mind wispers inside your head
THATS PRISON.....

You felt you were a strong person
You leave weaker
But no longer afraid
THATS PRISON.....

You return
The darkness no longer a fog
After the lights go out you can see
No chills set in as the steel doors clang shut
You can't hear the silence
Your body doesn't sweat from fear
Your eyes now shut for rest
You don't keep your back to a wall
And you've forgotten God
THATS PRISON.....

You don't bother to mumble
Your head doesn't wisper to you
You turned from strong to cold
You were alone but now you are ALONE
You are a second timer
You are excepted for your failures
By the others who have failed
NOW you are the PRISON.....

1984

ARGUMENT

We three had been walking for nearly an hour when Adam suggested, "Let's sit down somewhere. My feet are getting tired." So we found a bench and settled down, Adam, George, and I, to take our ease. It was a hot summer afternoon in August.

George sucked thoughtfully on his pipe, his serious expression indicating he was about to launch another offensive in his never-ending argument with Adam. I seldom join in their arguments because most of the things they discuss involved matters of which I have scant knowledge. So, this time as usual, I simply listened and tried to understand the discussion, which went something like this:

"You know," George said, "I've given a lot of mental consideration to the idea of thought reformation and rehabilitation. Sometimes I wonder who needs reformation most, the pseudo reformers, the reformed or the yet to be reformed. I recognize that by law I have done something wrong or contrary to the LAW. There were reasons for what I did, but naturally the reasons did not justify the action; nor, which is equally as important, does the end justify the means. I realize also that the end I sought was, according to the standards of society, good in itself; but the means for obtaining the results were at fault. I understand my position perfectly, but I wonder if those who condemn the means understand the reason for their condemnation?"

"What are you getting at?" Adam asked suspiciously.

"Well, let us assume that they do," George said, "and pass on to other means I might have employed to obtain the results I sought. Take simple commodity production and the exchange of commodities. As you know, money was introduced to facilitate barter. It is a simple medium of exchange. Money should not increase the wealth of him who owns it, for there is no gain in any equitable transaction of exchange. The only gain, if you can call it such, in an equitable transaction is our acquisition of goods that are more inclined to satisfy us than that which we contributed to the deal.

"Originally the laws of exchange were such that the circulation of commodities always left those commodities with the same value that they had before they were exchanged. But do you think you'd find anyone today exchanging a commodity without getting a surplus value? Not likely. The original laws of exchange had to be broken by outright robbery or extortion for surplus value to be obtained. The law stated categorically that equals, being equal to equals, must be exchanged for equals. I conclude, therefore, that where we have the recognition of the law of equal commodity exchange, we cannot possibly achieve surplus value by exchange. How is it then that we have traders who demand and get surplus value by exchange?"

With the air of a man who had reached a satisfactory conclusion, George paused to relight his pipe which he had neglected during his dissertation. He certainly must have expected some form of rebuttal, still I thought he looked surprised at the speed with which Adam presented a counter argument.

con't

"You've overlooked human nature, and supply and demand," Adam said slyly. "Besides, in today's business world it isn't so much a matter of being able to produce a commodity which, when it is consumed on the market, will afford the producer more value than what it cost him to produce it. What the producer does is quite simple: he searches for something that can produce value and comes across labour power, which is a real commodity that can be traded for on the market. Labour power may be purchased for less than the value of the commodity it produces; but this trading doesn't upset your fair-exchange law, does it?"

Adam smirked as he spoke the last sentence and then fell silent, indicating that his refutation was complete, but George could present further argument or point of fact if he chose.

"Let's go back to your producer going to the market," George said. "You described him as looking for something that could produce value. Your expression is very apt, but it's still not as simple as you make it sound. I agree that at the beginning, when the producer and the worker meet, each trades his commodity for the other's. The producer receives the worker's labour power and gives wages in return. But let us follow this process of exchange through to its logical conclusion. What happens is this:

"The producer has made an investment and he expects to profit, in which case there must be a surplus value in the product of the worker's labor. Don't you see the moral issue? After the investor has recovered his investment the worker's product should, by any equitable law, belong to him who made it - namely the worker. However, our property laws and our complicated forms of exchange tend to hide these basic truths and cover up what really happens.

"Now we all know that to take the product of a worker is wrong and evil, but in these cases it is not illegal. Therefore, the legality of an action is not determined by the results, but by methods."

I had expected Adam to offer some rebuttal, as he usually does, and I was surprised to actually see him smiling agreement.

"Of course, George," he said. "Anyone who has ever given the matter any serious thought must arrive at your conclusion. The legality of our actions certainly does depend on our methods."

I couldn't tell whether George was happy about Adam agreeing with him or not; but I thought he looked a little put out as we rose of one accord and began strolling again, we three together, along the shade of the prison wall.

THE EDITOR

"CRIME DOESN'T PAY "

A man charged with embezzlement appeared in court without counsel.

"How does it happen you have no lawyer?" asked the Judge.

"Well, I did engage an attorney," explained the suspect, "but as soon as he found out that I had not stolen the \$50,000, he would have nothing to do with my case."

Mr. Robert Kaplan
Solicitor General
340 Laurier Ave. W.
Ottawa, Ontario
Paschal O'Toole
K1A 0P8

15 February 1984

Dear Mr. Kaplan:

Re: Privacy Rights

I wish to extend a thank you for your letter of 1983-11-23, and a puzzled silence for not answering my letter of 1983-11-26.

The Commissioner of Corrections has referred my complaint to your office. His referral seems to suggest that the unethical, ill-formed, ambiguous and even unlawful privacy related policies and directives practiced by Canada's correctional officers, originated from your office, and that it's your responsibility to rectify the escalating and renown problem in Canada's prisons.

The proof of the matter is, according to a correctional officer, both the Prime Minister and you, launched the employment of correctional officers in penal institutions of the opposite sex with seemingly total abandon for the naturist privacy rights of the inmates. The Canadian Human Rights Commission will also verify this, including my file which contains everything from an inmate who seriously contemplated suicide due to incessant privacy invasions by female guards, to male guards being charged for sexual activities with their female prisoners due to questionable duty rostering.

I was also informed by a correctional officer that there is a rumor that originated from Canada's Correctional Service that the female is less prone to be sexually aroused than the male (less noticable - my opinion), and therefore, can be safely duty rostered to work all locations in male prisons, whereas, male guards are restricted in certain assignments in female prisons. (e.g., P4W - Kingston Penitentiary For Women).

This rumor finds support in the Correctional Service of Canada's book; Canadian Prison Law - Commissioner's Directives, chapter 249, and Commissioner's Directives Resp. Centre 100, Series 800, Section 2, Chapter 07, D.O.I., 1982-11-30, pages 3 and 4 of 8, which in round about words state, that females in 'urgent' or pressing circumstances (non-emergency situations) can observe or even strip and rectum search males (i.e., whole institutions, as you are well aware), whereas, males are not permitted to do likewise to females. Plus, according to Ottawa directive: Section 4, Subsection 11, paragraph 4, male inmates are not allowed to grieve this PRACTICE under any circumstances unless there is bodily contact.

Along with this, let's not forget that female guards are permitted to patrol male commune lavatory facilities, observe male inmates in the so called privacy of their cells using their commodes, changing their clothing... even going to the extent of charging the inmate for covering his cell front in an endeavour for privacy.

Though I make no disposition distinction between male/female guards, since the female guards call this job, wage and promotion equality rights with their male counterparts, perhaps you would be willing to inform the people of Canada when this practice is going to slime its way into female prisons, asylums, sanatoriums, police stations, hospitals, shops, rest homes, one's own home, and finally the streets of Canada. After all, there's a new push by the male guards of Collins Bay to practice such deviant conduct in the Kingston, Penitentiary For Women.

As you are well aware from my previous correspondance, Canada's attorney's are quite familiar with this problem. They are also familiar that many American prisons have taken this problem to court with complete success. Myself, since this issue also involves society, I am after much more:

It is the firm opinion of knowledgable persons closely associated with human rights, that there should be incorporated in the Affirmative Action Program recently adopted by the Federal government a 'clause or bill' to protect society from its blanketed and unconditional application.

This clause or bill should decree that job, wage and promotion equality rights does not gain precedence over naturist privacy rights under ROUTINE circumstances. And that this should be lawfully enforced upon all facets of society, especially among the work force in order to prevent the instituting of policies, directives and law that would infringe or terminate a second parties already established rights under normal circumstances, or until such rights are judicially nullified or proven un-Constitutional. It should be confirmed that if a job placement under normal circumstances reasonably constitutes an incessant invasion of naturist privacy, then the job placement is simply unlawful.

If equality and privacy rights cannot accomodate or intermesh for the good intention of all, let's say because of security reasons, then both rights should be legally evaluated according to intensity, then dealt with accordingly. Security regulations are no excuse to have a persons' privacy violated by the opposite sex under routine circumstances. The implementation of the Affirmative Action Program and Section 15(1) of the Constitution should not authorize the dilution or termination of another persons' rights, especially if this invasion of rights means a practiced perversion of ethics, and thereby, violates the basic security of the person.

Based on the PATTERN and number of inmate complaints across Canada as to their intimate privacy being violated under routine circumstances by the opposite sex, and regardless if the prison problem is solved, the Affirmative Action Program should be legally examined and refined to the benefit of all people, whether they be incarcerated or free members of society.

This is to respectfully request your concern in this matter.

Sincerely,

Philip J. Conway
(C.B.I.)



"Miss Privy, you state in your reason why you feel you qualify for the position of Correctional Officer..... is that you get along exceptionally well with men."

ENDLESS HIGHWAY

Clanging gates, jingling keys, clicking locks.
Footsteps in the corridor,
Eyes peering in the dark.
Another day in this prison world,
Thousands more to go,
Shallow breath, heart beat, eyelids slightly apart.

Cold creeps into the stonework,
Steel reinforcement begins to creak.
Not all becomes silent,
Though it is still.
Always a disturbance,
Another restless sleep.

Lingering solitude, incomplete thoughts,
Pushing, tugging, stretching at will,
Mind wanders distant.
Remembering,
That last stretch of highway,
Just over the hill.

Standing, waving, smiling,
Can it really be you.
Vision unclear, too distant to reach.
On horseback, a fast train, a row boat, a plane,
Racing after you,
I can't compete.

Tired - weary - exhausted, dry,
Lonely, hungry, empty terrain,
Endless highway, hill after hill.
Cold, eyes open,
Clanging gates, jingling keys, clicking locks,
Its always the same.

@ 7382 Doucette.

STUDENTS PANIC IN 'PRISON' SETTING

News Services:

CHICAGO - It was supposed to be "make-believe," but the fear and loathing were genuine.

When a Catholic high school was turned into a mock prison for the weekend, the exercise became too realistic for some students.

Carried away with their roles, student "guards" subjected the volunteer "inmates" to insults, strip searches and solitary confinement.

As in real jails, some prisoners couldn't take it, and staged escapes with very real risks.

"I couldn't stay here another night," said Ken Barnes, 17. "I climbed to the top of a ladder, jumped as high as I could and got on the roof. I ran to the other side of the school and jumped down - it must have been 15 feet. My heart was going bam, bam."

DeEtta Rader, 16, another "prisoner," jumped from a second-story window to the street.

She became confused in a frenzied search for a friend's house and a passerby who noticed her prison garb - hospital scrubs - pointed her out to the class teacher, John Blake, who was searching for her by car.

Blake cornered her in a back yard and placed her in "solitary" where she stayed until 8 a.m. Sunday, the end of the project.

The experiment began Friday at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School of suburban Westchester. It was designed to give 95 participating students an insider's view of the U.S. prison system.

Blake said yesterday the experience was meant to teach, not to scare. Written parental consent was required.

Guards insulted prisoners and flashed lights in their eyes in hourly bedchecks at night. Prisoners who failed to address the guards as "Sir" or "Ma'am" lost recreation or communal eating privileges. If they talked back, they went to solitary.

"It was all 'ha, ha' until we lined them (prisoners) up against the wall and said, 'Take your clothes off,' said Blake. "The humiliation was just painted across their faces."

Prisoners, separated by sexes, had to strip to their underwear in front of guards of the same sex, and hand over their belongings.

During a cooling-off period after the experiment ended, a 17-year-old boy who had been in solitary or under guard the entire weekend, rose and told the guards: "You people with your guards' shirts and your ties and clipboards were big stuff for a few days. Now you're nothing at all to me. You're zero."

December 28, 1983

To:

Bob Doucette,

I was sitting here reading the 'TOCSIN'. I didn't put the book down until the last word was read. I turned my thoughts back to the front cover. I had this urge to colour the front page. But other than the holly peeping out among the bars, the colours turned out pretty bleak.

I started to think about this holly and it formed different thoughts in my mind. This holly indicated in my mind, the green ray of hope among the prisoners amidst the dull surroundings of the prison walls. (I know in actuality, the holly indicates the Christmas issue.) Anyway, above this ray of hope, rings the warning bell. A warning bell indicating 'Freedom & Dignity'. At this point my thoughts were muddled. The bell seems to be tolling from outside the prison walls.

Must these men wait until they're outside the prison to be able to experience this? Freedom....yes. But dignity?

Anyone who reads the 'TOCSIN' should think about this and think about it hard. Then maybe with a little luck & prayer, '84' will start off with a little help from everyone; that bell will be tolling louder and that little ray of hope will become a reality.

Perhaps, that little ray of green hope will be surrounding the bell of 'Freedom & Dignity'. A signal of better things to come.

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this. I really do hope that 1984 brings you more hope of better things to come and a lot of prayers answered.

May I just say that all of you have done a good job on the Tocsin, and I am looking forward to the next issue. God Bless you.

Valerie Morrison

P.S.

If the front cover can make a person think about things happening in the prison, as much as it did for me; can you just imagine the knowledge you are passing on in the book itself? Keep up the good work!! I for one will be passing on my new found knowledge, and in turn, I will pass onto the 'TOCSIN' their view points.

* * * * *

Dear Valerie:

We dearly love to hear from our readers. Your letter in all respect had been intended for Colin. I gave him credit as designer of the front cover, as he, as far as I know, did design it initially. However, it has since been revised by myself.

In any event, we the 'TOCSIN' staff wish to thank you sincerely for your compassionate sense of perception and articulate concerns expressed.

Yours Truly
Bob Doucette

THE CON AND THE MOUSE TRAP

With five years of my life behind bars I still hadn't realized that I was serving a life sentence. I was twenty-two years old & I wasn't ready to except the fact that I was living a reality, it all seemed to be a nightmare. One which would pass when I had the courage to wake up.

By not excepting the facts of the reality which surrounded me I was going through drastic changes which I was totally unaware of. Everything began to fall into its proper perspective and the person I had turned into, I was finally able to face.

It all began one night while I was laying in bed. I was very comfortable, laying back watching television, when I was disturbed by the sound of rattling. It seemed to be coming from my garbage bag. I got out of bed and turned on the light so I could discover the source of this noise. Just as I approached the garbage bag I saw a tiny mouse jump from the bag and make its escape.

Later that night just as I was slowly drifting off to sleep I was again disturbed by the same rattling made by the mouse in my garbage bag. I threw a slipper at the bag which scared the mouse off and I was finally able to sleep.

The next three nights in a row that very same mouse would return looking for food and keep me awake. I then decided I was going to put an end to this irritating little creature once and for all. So on the forth night, in hopes that he would return, I set up a trap and used some cheese as bait. I laid in bed and waited to see if the mouse would fall for my trap. About one hour after patiently waiting, I saw the mouse heading for what I hoped would be his last meal. When I felt confident that the mouse was happily eating and not being suspicious of there being a trap, I sprung it on him. I then jumped out of bed, turned on the light to see if my hunt was successful and it was. That little critter would not keep me from sleeping any more. I left him in the trap and was looking forward to a good nights sleep....., it didn't turn out like I had hoped. I was trying to sleep but all I could do was toss and turn. For the life of me, I couldn't get that mouse off my mind. I thought of that little critter trapped there in my power to do with as I pleased.

Instead of flushing it I decided I was going to build a home for the little critter and see whether or not I could make a pet out of him. I was finally able to sleep, looking forward to the next day when I could start to build his new home.

When morning came I rushed off to my place of work which was the carpenter shop and I began working right away. I spent the whole morning working on the new comfortable home for what I thought to be my new pet and friend. When the home was finished, (I don't like to use cage) I just couldn't wait to see if the mouse would like it and run on the wheel I had built and eat the food I would feed him.

The home was equipped with a plexy-glass roof so I could watch the little critter and see what his reaction would be in his new home. That afternoon I didn't bother going to lunch, I was just too excited to eat. I went right to my cell and transferred the mouse from the trap to its new home. I gave him a dish of water and some cheese. For the next hour, I watched the mouse as he desperately searched for a way to escape. I was surprised to see how that little critter searched every crack and corner of that wooden home. He wanted out and when he found that there was no escape route, he went to the corner furthest away from where the food was and curled up into a little ball.

I went to work that afternoon thinking that my new pet just needed some time alone to get use to his new home. When I got back to my cell after work, I went directly to the mouse to see how it was doing. I found him just as he had been when I had left for work three hours earlier. Still in the corner, curled in a little ball. He hadn't even touched any of the food which I had left for him. It got me to thinking....,why would the mouse turn away from what I had given him, a comfortable home with all the food he wanted without having to look for it. Slowly I began to see things differently. I put myself in the mouse's shoes, (only in a manner of speaking), and I discovered we were very much the same.

About twelve hours had passed since I had first put the mouse in the wooden home. I stood there above the little critter and looked down at him through the plexy-glass roof. He was still curled up in a little ball and he would not move from that corner. It became apparent to me that he had decided to starve himself to death. I then searched back to the recorded memories of my mind. I thought of how many times I had contemplated suicide over the past five years. I was scared because I really couldn't handle being locked up and here I was keeping this little mouse from his freedom. (What had I turned into?) I began to feel sorry for it and inside me there was a stirring of emotions that I hadn't felt in a very long time. I began thinking of how badly I wanted to be free and with those I cared for and loved.

The years I had been in prison had conditioned me to not wonder about my freedom as much as I should have. I was becoming untrusting, uncaring and the emotions which I had become so good at hiding were no longer real feelings to me. Frankly, I was becoming institutionalized and I wasn't even aware of it. Finally realizing what it seemed I had forgotten; I became aware that I was still a caring person and I still had emotions, true honest to God feelings. I felt alive again and I was bursting with this surge of energy which started me crying. Not crying because I longed for home and my family, but because, with the help of this tiny mouse I got the strength and courage to wake up to the reality around me and fight for my freedom in a constructive way rather than just giving up and accepting what I believed to be my fate.

With the help of my little friend, I was finally able to face myself and by doing so, he helped me escape the prison which I had created within myself. I was now free with a sense of direction and a goal to strive for. I was alive again.

Now two years later, when ever I hear a noise of rattling in my garbage bag, I smile. I feel grateful to my little friend the mouse. I freed that little critter just as he freed me and I was happy to see him run off.

By:
David Aubertin

Dedicated to: Sheley Cross
who enlightens my life.....

Awaken now! reflect
this day was made for you
dedicate it to someone else
Cherish one moment of every day
Bring happiness into this world and you cannot keep it from yourself.

WITH LOVE
B O B

Guard my children in my absence dear Lord,
Wherever they may happen to be.
Take them into your personal ward,
And guide them ever so tenderly.
Point their feet to the highest ground,
Along the straight and narrowest way.
Don't let them falter and fall down,
But have them reach the top to stay.
Let your spirit enter their souls,
And teach them of your gentle ways.
Let them learn the spiritual roles,
That will guide them from day to day.
This dear Lord concludes my prayer,
Thank you for hearing my plea.
I know that I can now rest assured,
That you will guard my children for me.

...22

M2/W2

Unfortunately, it is all too often the purpose of columns such as this to point out and highlight the pressing deficiencies of the 'system.' With that in mind, it is understandably a welcome change when the opportunity presents itself to write about something that not only fills a definite need, but fills it with compassion and humanity.

Just such a 'something' is M2/W2; a Christian oriented organization operating out of Toronto. Working in co-operation with both the Federal & Provincial Correctional Services, M2/W2 attempts to match up suitable inmates with appropriate community volunteers. These volunteers seek to provide long term, one on one friendships and supportive relationships for those prisoners without active support from the street. They do not, however, attempt to usurp the role already held by half-way houses, employment services, and other such social service agencies. Nor, do they seek 'converts.' They are simply committed to the idea of long-term friendships "with prison inmates who are isolated and resourceless."

The John Howard Society, Collins Bay Chapter, recently had the opportunity to hear Harry Nigh (Executive Director of M2/W2) and Ab Vickers explain the purpose and objectives of M2/W2. Most of the members were favourably impressed with the sense of purpose and commitment evinced by these two men. They had their organization well under control. They knew precisely where they were going, and understood and accepted the limitations inherent in any undertaking such as theirs.

M2/W2 is a community/church based organization which receives (by design) little of its funding from government sources. It fills a real need within the prison community, but needs increased community support - particularly as regards volunteers - to enable it to expand to institutions not currently served.

For more information, please write:

Man to Man (M2)
Women to Women (W2)
260 High Park Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M6P 2S6

Submitted by:
Guy Lount

Money, And Where Is It Going?

At times, when money is in short supply, the Federal government seems to have a surplus of Canadian tax-payer's money to give away to anyone that can get a contract with the Federal Penitentiary system. I'm sure it's like this with any government operated business, whether it is Federal or Provincial.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I don't mind seeing money put to good use, but when I see our money wasted, well, then I can't help but be concerned.

I am a prisoner at Collins Bay Penitentiary. I've been incarcerated since 1979, and have meanwhile seen hundreds of thousands, perhaps, millions of dollars of Canadian tax-payer's money wasted each year on renovations of our institution.

I don't mind seeing this place being repaired, but it really burns me up to see the hired contractors return a second and third time to re-do the same work that they were suppose to do the first time.

Now, come on! This isn't the way to run a business. There are a lot of talented men behind these four walls that can do the same quality of work, or even better work than some of these so-called skilled contractors.

But, oh-no! The government would rather dish out millions of tax dollars than pay the prisoner a little extra money to do the same work. Talk about rehabilitation!

No wonder Canada has one of the highest recidivism rates in the world. Just take a look around here. About one-quarter of the prisoner population is unemployed. If only the politicians could acquire a better understanding of the quality of work we can do, then maybe there wouldn't be as much money wasted in our prison.

The way I see things, if they would pay us a little higher than the average \$25.00 every two weeks to do some of the work in our prison, rather than hire profit-making contractors, the high rate of recidivism would drop as we would have a little more money to pay our rent, purchase clothes, food... upon our immediate release.

It's no laughing matter to be released from prison with a measely \$100.00 or less, then be expected to make ends meet without having to steal once again to support the wife and children.

Given a chance, I strongly feel that my idea would help the convict, and save the tax payer millions of dollars a year that could otherwise be spent in more practical ways.

I don't know any more who are the biggest crooks - us, or the government???

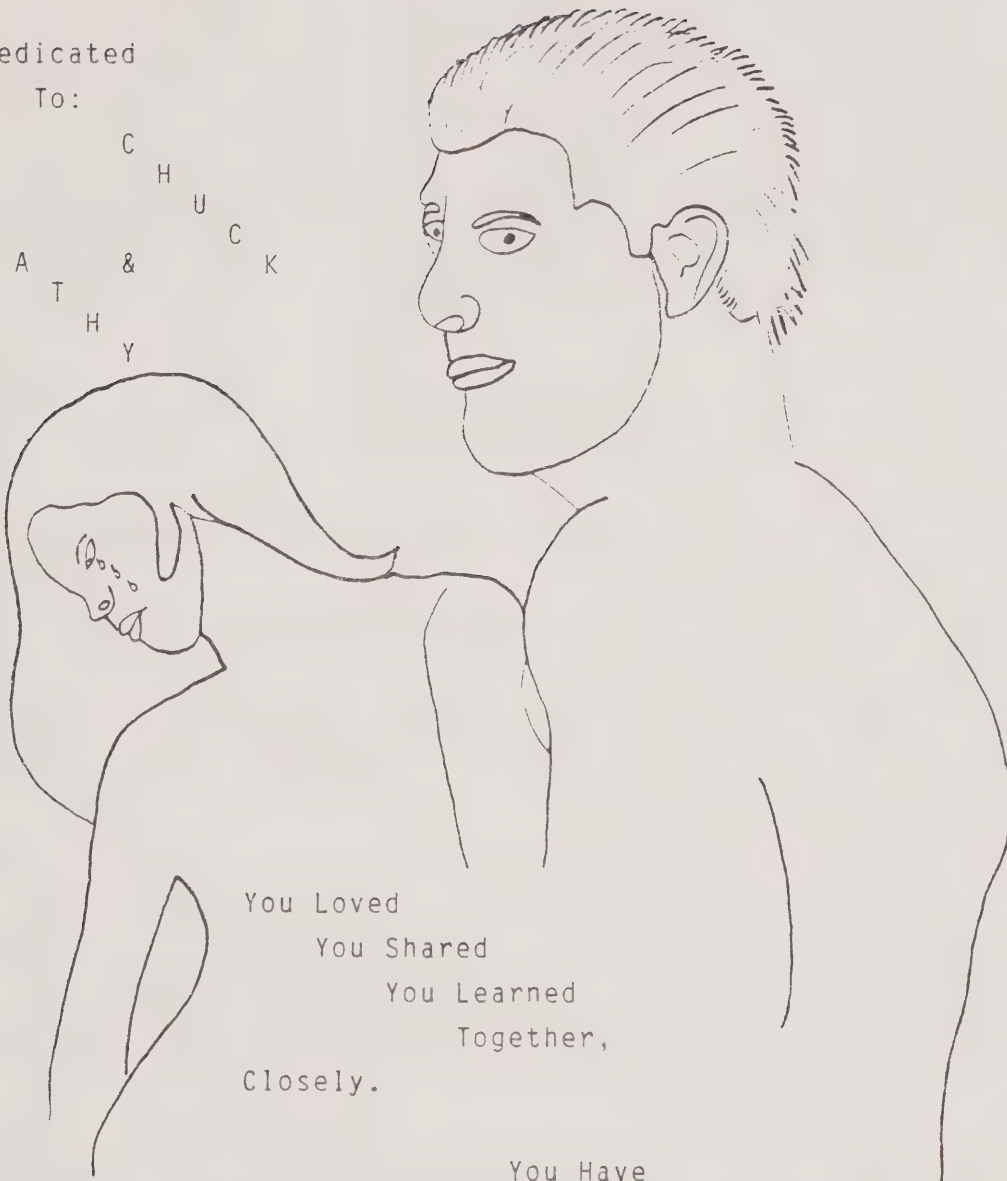
Submitted by:

Garry Parsons
#4766

Dedicated

To:

KATHY
& CHUCK



You Loved
You Shared
You Learned
Together,
Closely.

You Have
You Keep
Loving
Eachother,
Distantly.

My Warmest Affection
Always,
BoB Doucette

INSIDE LOOKING OUT

Fortunately for all, not everyone stands still when we see \$000,000,000.00 wasted and unnecessarily spent. The John Howard Society of Collins Bay most certainly doesn't stand still. We see one situation in particular where certain policy is contradictory in and of itself, resulting in \$000,000.00 needlessly spent.

A prisoner earns the right to be released on leave of absence. TEMPORARY ABSENCE. He must meet a list of criteria before he may qualify as a no risk candidate to exercise such a privilege. A prisoner released on Temporary Absence no longer impresses others as being offensive. While absent he remains legally bound by regulations imposed by the National Parole Board and Corrections Services Canada. (C.S.C.)

The end result, is that the prisoner is required by law to surrender himself back to his captivity only to absorb additional tax dollars. Your money!

Think of where else that money could be used. That inmate had already demonstrated good faith. He poses no threat to anyone or anyplace. He acted like a responsible citizen, yet, he must return to prison. Often for periods of time amounting to years.

MONEY! Isn't that what perpetuates the colossal wheel of industry, social welfare services, armies and prison. Money is what could build a baseball park or arena, even that long over due wheel-chair, braces for Sheley or Jimmy's first bicycle. Certainly, you would find charity organizations having need for money. Regardless of your findings, anything would be far better than spending it on the cost of keeping a man in prison who has long proved he is capable of functioning as a concerned and responsible citizen.

Prison effects an individual from the very first moment those hand-cuffs are securing your arms by the wrist. You feel a condemned man. In the eyes of those who might be present, (your wife, children, grandparents, any family member or friend) you search for understanding as you are forcibly escorted away. At that very instance, the hate and contempt which overpowers you would, if it were possible, destroy a whole universe, the hate is so intense. Never because you were arrested but, because the humiliation the police put you through, the disrespect they show to your family and their personal belongings, the unnecessary show of power and pain they inflict by placing the hand-cuffs so tight, there are imprints left in your wrists for several days later.

Society demands we get our due. Well that's our punishment. We go on to spend sixteen hours a day sitting on a stool or a bench with only enough space to accommodate a meal tray. If you happen to be one of the last few to be placed in a jail corridor, you had best be able to except what you may find and/or be rejected by the others. When space is already limited, people have a tendency to resent those who pose as a threat of occupying.... can't

any part of that space. Some jails will not permit sitting on the floor. This is a discription of the holding centres prior to being tried. Many, many people sit in these places for years. It becomes dead time, no remission may be earned and the taking into account upon sentencing is only a myth. These are the places where you are kept in a corridor for 16 hours a day with little more to do than play cards, read a book or pace the floor. Heres where you learn your spouse has found a new friend, quite often your best friend at that. Someone else now wears that particular shirt or sweater you wore proudly. All your possessions have been sold or stolen. The only philosophy which drives you on is bitter hate. Again not necessarily against the system but for those who have let you down. After a few years of this kind of treatment you are sent to a warehouse where you are restricted in growth, space, activity, freedom and many rights. Along with you comes your friends, "bitterness & hate". Now new reasons for animosities are apparent.

Yes dear friends, the punishment is more apparent than many are led to beleive. It is often cruel. Most C.S.C. staff readily except that 10 years or less is considered short time, ten years; and that the average stay of an individual is 5 years. Imagine, try hard to examine the thousands of things that has occured to you during the past 5-10 years, or form a prolepsis of what you expect of yourself in the next 5-10 years. WE CAN'T DO THAT!

Our time is constant routine. On the hour activity. I could likely explain what I did 3 years ago to this very date and be within 80% correct of my recollection. I can't look ahead 5 years when my ideas are within prison without any idea of when I will be released or the conditions I will have to face when that occurs.

Five years, ten years, many are held for as long as twenty-five years of having to live under minute detail type of circumstances. Those are the breaks you say? Well your a real optimist aren't you! You likely stole those words from someone, perhaps even a prisoner, when he was helplessly shunning a deep deep wound that may have otherwise resulted in overwhelming distraught - total dispair had he not adopted such a philosophy as: "Those are the breaks". We say 5 years is a very long time and that 2 years is a a very long time, that 6 months is a long time and that 25 years is utterly a ridiculous amount of time to keep a man in prison.

An inmate has had his life monitored every hour of the day from the moment of his arrest. An understanding of that human being, an evaluation of his character as concluded within the first brief period of time while incarcerated shows the findings to be within 93% correct. Those statistics are obtained and shown by the many who have been evaluated and found fit, so to say, as being able to be released on Temporary Absence. They have proven their ability to function as responsible citizens. Having accomplished this, it should be noted that, they no longer need to be kept in prison. They have endured their just punishment. It does NOT require 5 - 10 - 25 years to properly assess a man nor for punishment to take its toll.

con't

How often have you thought of the thousands of men and women caged? Start thinking dollars and sense and you will surely find that \$000,000,000.00 are wasted keeping people in prison much, much too long. Especially those who have established credibility.

For the year of 1983, 169 prisoners were released on Temporary Absence. Thats just for the Christmas period only, and from the Kingston region only. Of the 169 released, only one failed to return. (an individual, although this may be contrary to popular belief, who only has a short period of time left of his sentence, is more likely not to return than those who have only started his sentence. This is mainly because the individual who has a short amount of time left, has been in for much to long. The individual just starting a sentence, finds an incentive in returning for he can look at his future a lot more optimistically.)

It costs \$2,300.00/yr. to supervise a person on parole, as opposed to \$45,000.00/yr. to keep that same person in prison. Think of the 169 who were released on T.A.'s and are eligible for parole. Calculate the money the present system is wasting. Its your MONEY!



N A T I O N A L P A R O L E B O A R D

You have been denied parole Mr. Doucette, in view of the following reasons:

"New confidential information leads the National Parole Board to believe that Mr. Doucette's extremely positive Institutional performance represents his efforts to earn a quick release and does not reflect a real change in attitude. In this light, Mr. Doucette continues to represent the undue risk that he was at the time of his arrest."

The Editor
Mr. Doucette

Death In An Illusion

(By: M McKenzie #8495)

I picked up the handgun and blew a hole in the phone. The thought entered my mind that I was going insane. After three days of listening to non-existent phone conversations, suffering unbearable anxiety, and having my mind lost in Ma-bell, it was almost too easy to kill the connection.

After putting the gun down and tossing the phone across the room, I noticed the destructive havoc I had obviously created in my usually orderly living-room. The place was a shambles, and the television was in pieces.

I could barely remember taking offense to something going on in the T.V., but for the life of me, I couldn't recall killing it too. I did know that all this had happened before I started with the phone conversations.

Hell, I couldn't see an end to this madness, or for that matter, I could barely remember when it all began.

I glanced at the coffee table before me; my thoughts scattered, confusion paramount. What I saw on the table brought a drooly grin to my face. Paranoia paradise, and the members of my own sweet, little family.

My family, as I so innocently refer to it as, consists of two, nine shot .22 automatic handguns - nothing extremely deadly, but good enough to do the job, and last but not least, the baby of my family; an ugly 18" double-barrel shotgun. A most fearsome weapon at close quarters, to which the remains of my television can testify.

Then there is my well used fit and spoon. Beside these pleasant little items was 'the stuff.' Good shit too, only I seemed to be short changed. As I tried to recall, didn't I have an ounce, five or six days ago? Now, all I had was about a couple grams. The grief of it all! 'Oh, well,' I thought, 'nothing good lasts forever.'

The street lights were shining through the slats of my bamboo blinds, and onto the floor of my ground level apartment. I didn't know what day it was, but I did know that I was stuck in the reality of my fantasy world. There were no lucid thoughts in this home, and there were none to be found in the near future.

Blanking my mind from all else, I started to mix a hit. Almost finished, it struck me that I hadn't seen my girlfriend or any other person for as far back as I could remember. Not that I really gave a damn.

The fix, ready, I rolled up my sleeve and came close to passing out. I couldn't believe what my eyes were telling me. From my wrists to my shoulders were needle holes and yellowish bruises. But it cut no ice with me; in went the spike.

I was shaking so bad that I missed the vein on the first three attempts. But, I knew that with perseverance, I'd get what I wanted. I controlled my nerves, and the fourth attempt worked. What a relief it was to finally draw blood. Quickly, I injected the liquid into my arm.

I began to sweat, like a pig. Getting up, I opened the window and sat back down again. After three more hits, I soon forgot the

breeze flowing through the window. Had I remembered, I would have saved myself a lot of grief and trouble.

I was sitting back trying to figure out where I could get hold of some more 'good stuff,' when I heard the door of my apartment gently rattling. It did not register that the door had been rattling for the past five minutes since I was absorbed in watching an army of crabs crawling across my shag carpet. Then, when the very walls began to breathe, I was immobilized with shock.

I jumped to my feet, at the same time feeling a rush that almost knocked me to the floor. The blood was pounding in my ears. My heart pounding in my throat felt like it was pumping adrenaline through by system at 100 miles an hour.

Finally, it dawned on me that someone had to be trying the door; trying to force their way into MY apartment. With a battle cry lodged in my throat, and scared shitless, I forced myself towards the peephole in the door, terrified as to what I might see on the other side.

'This can't be happening,' I thought to myself, as I reached the door. 'Something is going on here.'

"The pigs!" a voice screamed in my head. I could just make out the two pigs. One on each side of my door, just at the edge of my vision. I could barely see the edge of their uniforms, though I was able to discern that one was male and the other female.

I wrenched my mind out of its shocked stupor. "What do they want with me? What're they doing here? What the hell did I do?" A thousand questions raced through my mind. Quickly, I ran back into the living-room and grabbed both .22's, jamming one in the back of my belt and the other in my front. Then, I grabbed my baby; the ugly little sawed-off of a runt, and cradled her tenderly in my arms: "You pigs don't know who you're messing with!"

I looked at the windows, and could just make out shadows moving around on the other side of the blinds. The shadows were moving. It seemed that they were checking the windows, trying to get in. I ran from room to room, looking as closely as I dared through the slats in the blinds. The shadows were everywhere.

The blood raced through my veins. I was as close to the edge as possible without going over.

Shaking uncontrollably, I made my way back to the living-room and sat down trying to calm myself. Still thinking about the shadows, I tried to figure a way out of my predicament.

The shadows are out to get me - I just knew it! I could feel them. Smell them. The pigs had me boxed in, but I wasn't going to give in without a fight. They want me, then they'll have to come in and get me.

I slowly crept back to the door again. Yea, the bastards were still there. "I'll get the guy first, and freak the bitch right out. Yea, if I get these two, I've got a good chance on making the street."

"Knock, dammit! Why the hell don't they knock? What are they doing just standing there for?"

I took another quick peek through the peephole just to reassure myself that they were still there. They were. I made my way back to the living-room trying to decide on what action to take.

I put my baby down and started to mix myself a final hit, thinking that if they don't make their move first, then I'll make mine.

I'm not going to wait untill they're good and ready to play out this game.

I jammed the spike into my arm, and without drawing, shot the load into my vein.

Feeling good, I grabbed the ugly little sawed off and made for the door determined to get things rollin.

The knock came just as I grasped the door knob. I yanked open the door with a rebel yell on my lips, and let go with both barrels. I dropped the shotgun and watched in horror as my pretty girlfriend's face exploded, and her blood and brains splattered all over the hallway wall.

As I sunk over the edge of sanity, I recalled her last words to me:

"Speed kills!"

(fiction)

* * * * *

" EMER's "

Once we were both so deeply in love
Yet I can barely remember the start
And tho' we spent seven years together
Our eight one will see us apart.

So as we go our own separate ways
We know the fire of love still burns
Perhaps one day we will work it out
Or at least our friendship return.

Have you noticed the way we both pretend
That neither one of us really cares
What the other one may think or or feel
About the life that we used to share.

Still, you'll always be a part of me
For only your touch can ignite the flame
These undying embers will glow forever
My soul will always be touched by your name.

Perhaps some day, down the road of time
Who knows, maybe our paths might cross
And we may be granted one last chance
To find and nurture the love we lost.

But should our love be gone for good
And our Love Story brought to an end
Let us save a piece of what we had
And stay always...

The best of friends.

Michael Prior

Off the Editor's Desk

You may find, as you read through the 'TOCSIN', that several articles express attitudes towards the growing trend of violence within the prison system. Its a concern from any perspective.

Lately, it seems that most of my personal letters tend to take on the appearance of an 'article' about violence and facilities which are over-crowded.

My obvious thought was...to what degree of punishment does society expect prisoners to endure... and just how well informed are they on the conditional livelihood of Canadian Prisoners?

Lets consider the degree of punishment presently imposed. Is it effective? Is it humane and free of cruel and unusul treatment? Is over crowding/double bunking the "hush hush" part of punishment that is provoking violence?

Could it be that many people refer to prison as 'institution', as people are more apt to associate institution with a school, a hospital, or an old age home with strict security? In that line of thinking, the punishment aspect would practically escape thought.

Punishment may be viewed in a variety of stages. It is common knowledge that an over populated facility functions differently. The general demeanor of its' inhabitants, movement capacity, availability of liesure areas, employment situations, and all matters which reflect attitude will differ from that of a lesser populated facility, such as Resource Centres.

Over populated, crowded, cramped quarters? Isn't punishment part of the effects which follow? There is a degree of punishment from having to live day after day, year after year, in a prison with the best of conditions. So, we should expect punishment to leave a greater impression as the conditions worsen. To what extent is punishment; above and beyond imprisonment itself, necessary or acceptable and where is the "Opportunities Motto" expected to grow?

There are many trying events simply because there are too many people. Our movement is so restricted it could render you dizzy, or in the least of ways; nauseated, frustrated, irratated and/or impatient. While at the same time we could be saddened by an unfortunate incident or maddened, we could be dealing with sorrowful news from home, or with disappointment with Classification or the Parole Board. Then for the majority there is the constant strain of having to deal with sudden bursts of violence which often result in death.

Total up all those vibrations/feelings with all the aforementioned and tie it into each and every one who are in cramped quarters and what are the results? VIOLENCE!!

The effects of longer sentences and too few paroles. The effect of Cruel and Unusual punishment as per the level of stress on people in over-crowded facilities. Stress kills. "Undue Stress is Cruel and Unusual". The degree of punishment therfore exceeds its retributive/punitive function. Ask not WHY? We reap what we sow! Only who did the seeding?

" BE FAIR! GET ALL THE FACTS, THEN DECIDE. "

A Statement To The Editor - Kingston, Whig Standard

(Approximately a month and a half ago, the following correspondence was mailed to the local newspaper editor. It was not considered acceptable for publication.)

Dear Sir:

This letter is written concerning the many published stories in your newspaper involving inmates released from your area Penitentiaries. It seems that many of your stories deal with those inmates who have been classified as "Sex Offenders."

From so much publicity about these released inmates, there is a danger that society in general might develop the impression that everyone currently in, and about to be released from a Penitentiary ... is a crazed sexual maniac, anxious to prey on helpless Kingston women and children.

With such an impression cast, I feel people in society must be reminded that not all inmates of area institutions are, or ever will be, perpetrators of sexual crimes. It can be difficult enough for an inmate to re-enter society without having to deal with the stigma associated with the type of offences that seem so popular in your newspaper.

Perhaps, it would also be materialistic in the true sense of journalism if you wrote about other inmates who have successfully made it in Kingston. But again, maybe that wouldn't elevate your newspaper sales.

Sincerely,

Peter Desjarlais
(C.B.I., 1982)

(Since the aim of this newsletter is to provide viewpoints, the letter above is being included as a perfect example of the misunderstandings that are allowed to develop freely.)

(A copy of this newsletter is being mailed to the Editor of the Whig Standard so he will see that important viewpoints know no restrictions when the question of our morals are at stake... Editor.)

EDUCATION AN ALTERNATIVE

Attributed by: Peter Desjarlais
 & to: Little Joey Ward
Dedicated

People should be sentenced to a period of education rather than to just straight time. The reasoning, being that, people are placed into prison and are expected to rehabilitate themselves. Such an expectation is comparable to sentencing a jack-rabbit to a picnic for coyotes. Prisons are not rehabilitation centres. They are sin bins for crime. Granted, there are some small incentives, such as, transfers to lesser security institutions or camps. Passes and paroles may also be had; but, these are carrot on a stick sort of freedom. Freedom with chains. Prison life is unstableness, stressing degradation of the prisoner. What he gets he obtains by plotting and scheming. He is forced to do this as prison authorities consider signs of rehabilitation are those that a completely broken person shows. Needless to say, a broken person is of no use to himself, his family or to society.

In fact, the majority of people in prison are there for non-violent crimes. Their stupidity usually exceeding their ability. I realize I am not in prison for being smart. Had I known what crime was all about when I was young; I would have avoided it like the plague.

Getting back to pampering inmates. The government could provide the prisoner with wall to wall carpet, coloured television, steaks and even women, but this will mean nothing. The prison will still have the prisoners freedom. Given all those things and more and the prisoner would still exchange it for his freedom. Freedom to decide when to do something and how to do it. Prison's so-called luxuries mean nothing, while freedom means everything. Well known is the fact that, prisons are medieval concepts whose only purpose is to stunt the growth of its inhabitants. Take everything from me but leave me my sanity as without it, I am nothing more than a vegetable.

When you place a person in prison, you are taken his body and setting it down in a foreign environment. This is comparable to taking a Canadian child and placing that child in China. "Okay child", you say; "show me signs of immediate adjustment with no problems and you will be given parole". Like the child, the inmate will ask himself, "What signs are expected?" Am I to adjust as an inmate or as a free person?" God help him if he is wrong as this will be held against him forever. Prison life is not of love, caring and understanding. It is filled with bitterness and hate. Both are breeders of evilness; ripping and tearing at the mind. It allows no room for constructive developement. In fact, hate can turn and twist the mind so badly that, a sentence is no longer meaningful. It is just an obstacle on the path to getting even with society. When this occurs, the sentence is no longer the punishment. It is a suspension in time, a growth period prior to the release of prison's creation. The body was looked up but the mind was free to run wild in the dark cesspool that prison actually is.

con't

I have now explained that a person in prison has continued control over his mind while the authorities maintain custody of his body. Since the mind controls the body, the greater effect of imprisonment is on the mind. The inmate is surrounded by bitterness and hate. The effect that this has on the mind is simple to determine. For example, a person who is sentenced to 10 years is told he will get good time off (remission) for good behavior. Eventually he finds out that, the remission he has earned has to be served again on parole. So at most, all that he knows is that he has an indefinite amount of time on his hands. Upon entering prison, he is given clothes which make him look like Charlie Chaplin. Then an appearance before the work board where they employ you in a shop that least needs your skills. Regulations are never explained, except should you stumble into a violation of them. So, there you sit in a gloomy cell surrounded by total strangers and even more stranger customs. Privacy is shot to hell and decision making has been eradicated. The zombie state is expected and should you stray from this role, you are immediately considered a trouble maker. Frustration builds when Classification informs you that you are not trying to rehabilitate yourself. Bitterness takes over for being separated from your loved ones. Finally, the prisoner finds a friend. Hate is an old friend, never complaining and is always there to lend a helping hand. The mind has now completely adjusted to prison life.

In a different context; if the prisoner was to be sentenced to something constructive, the mind would be left open to useful development. Assisting with community programs and obtaining an education are beneficial to all. Most people are in prison for non-violent and property offences. Restitution aides the victim while monetary punishing the offender. At present all forms of incarceration facilities are over-crowded. This type of sentencing would lessen the over-crowding, save the tax-payer money and punish the offender while leaving him a useful member of society. More serious offenders calling for the removal from the community, his sentence could be determined by the offender's educational and employment skills, or lack of them. He could be sentenced to obtaining a set level of education and skills that upon completion would guarantee immediate employment. The place where he would obtain this education, would be educational orientated facilities. Thus, the prisoner would avoid the usual corruption and degradation that the prisons presently offer. The offender would be aware that his release date would depend on the completion of his education. Reaching that goal would be an incentive that is not offered in any prison. In fact, the lack of incentives is a major prison problem.

In cases of serious violent offences, the educational principle could still apply. Its foolish to think that society would be willing to accept a murderer back in their community. It is even more foolish to stick a person in a cell for 25 years as is presently being done. Prisons are like little squares in our society. While effectively keeping the offender in, they also keep the offender out of society to a point where upon his eventual release he is nothing but a problem. This is especially true of the person who has spent 25 years inside one of these squares. His return is comparable to landing on the moon. A solution to this problem would be similiar to that taken by France and England. France sent their prisoners to Devil's Island. England sent theirs to Austrailia.

con't

Repeating history with segregated educational facilities could be developed wher the offender could even take his family. Restrictions would be such that educational developement dominates. The offenders release would depend upon the highest level of education possible and in addition, a professional skill. That he would be there for some time is a foregone conclusion. He would be learning to be a very useful member of society. He would not suffer degradation or lose his family. All the incentives to reach his goal as set by the court would be at hand in the form of his family.

To those who will surely cry or complain about pampering the inmate, in respect to family involvement; most prisons for long term offenders presently permit conjugal visitation. So why not take it a step further. Like get into the Twentieth Century.

The end result would be an educational system that will produce educated people whose chances of surviving in society would be greatly increased. Although it would not erase crime, for crime like a lot of other bad habits, will always be with us. It will in any event effect the large number of people already in prison that lack educational and employable skills. Perhaps a smarter criminal would be produced but it seems that a criminal who steals with a pen is preferable to those who pose threat and violence.

Intelligence, not ignorance, is the solution to our future. An educational system that reclaims people is applied intelligence. Whereas a system that breeds bitterness and hate will produce contempt and future criminals and is a continuation of the ignorant past.

Prisoner 5536

Pistol Pete



Chairman's Final Word

I have always had the habit of having the final word. This habit does have a few good qualities and that is mainly because, you leave that extra added impression on individuals. There is always so much that one can say but, I found out that under these circumstances, one is better off to say nothing, (or very little).

I owe many people a thank you for their support and continuous contributions by way of helping us to keep our group together. We go through our own trial and tribulations, just like any other group or organization, but we always manage to get through the rough times. The best way to solve problems is to face them head on and not run from them. Our group has stuck together because it mainly keeps us from giving up on all our problems.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the group for their special added efforts and for giving me some wise advise when necessary. On behalf of the whole group, I would like to thank the population of Collins Bay for their much needed contributions to the TOCSIN, through our writing contest. I'm certain that this will be a continuous event since our first contest went over so well.

I would also like to give a special thanks to all our outside volunteers for putting up with my shhhhhhh-ing them during the meetings. One might draw an impression that I am a very strict or mean individual. Oh, contrare!! I sincerely enjoy my job as Chairman. It is not a job to me. I meet and work with very interesting people and learn something new everyday.

If this magazine was mine alone, I would be able to dedicate it to someone I love. As it is not, I won't be able to. So my Dear Mother, I'll wait until I'm rich and famous before I dedicate a book or play to you. You see my friends, the main source of my inspiration comes from my mother. The TOCSIN is not dedicated to you mom, but at least you know the thought was there.

My thanks goes out to everyone and especially to our readers. I hope that the violence in these places cuts back by the time our next issue is due. Then we can concentrate on more mellow matters. Just as the Editor would have it, I would like to ask for you, (the readers) to inform us if there is any particular subject or area of concern, you would like to hear about.

Bye for now and remember.....always keep your chin up!

Respectfully Yours,

Nick Malham
(CHAIRMAN)

GOOD READING MATERIAL

Barred From Prison - Claire Culhane. Pulp Book Publishers
572 Beatty St., Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2L3

Women in Prison - Kathryn W. Burkhart. Popular Library

Love and Rage - Carl Harp (excellent material)

Feminist Resistance to Male Violence - Cleis Press, Box 8281
Minneapolis, MN. 55408

Instead of Prisons - Available from PREAP, 3049 E. Genesee St.,
Syracuse, N.Y., 13224

NEWSLETTERS

Solidarity Committee Cp2, Succ la Cite, Montreal, Quebec, Canada
H2W 2M9

Anarchist Black Dragon - P.O. Box 520, Walla Walla, Wa. 99362
U.S.A.

Off Our Backs - 1841 Columbia Rd., Washington, D.C. 20009

Bulldozer - Box 5052, Station "A", Toronto, Ontario. M5W 1W4

The Guardian - 33 West 17th. Street. New York, N.Y., 10011

Grand Jury Product - 853 Broadway Street. New York, N.Y., 10003

Emancipation - Box 840, Benjamine Franklin Station, Washington,
D.C., 20044 United States of America

Feminine Focus - Denise Sassoon. P.O. Box 6850, Capitol Station
Phoenix, Arizona. 85005

HAPOTOC - P.O. Box 10638 EP Amsterdam, Holland. (great)

Madness Network News - 2150 Market St. San Francisco, C.A. 94140

Odyssey Newsletter - Millhaven Institution, P.O. Box 280, Bath,
Ontario. Canada. K0H 1G0

North American Anarchist - Box 2, Station "O", Toronto, Ontario
Canada. M4B 2B0

Through The Looking Glass - Box 33702, Seattle, WN. 98133 U.S.A.

The TOCSIN - P.O. Box 190, Kingston, Ontario. Canada. K7L 4V9

* * * * *

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The above are subscription forms for 1984-85. The rate of population change over, has made it difficult to staff the TOCSIN. We regret not having filled any previous subscriptions. A new team of John Howard members now have the TOCSIN assignment and we have made this project a matter of priority.

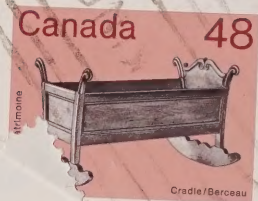
The Collins Bay Chapter of John Howard must absorb the cost of printing and postage. Subscription fees are now \$12.00 per yr. We need your support to make TOCSIN a functional project. We consider TOCSIN an integral part of our efforts to acknowledge interested individuals on various issues concerning all John Howard members and its' supporters.

In the event that you as a subscriber, know of, or wish to encourage others who may desire to subscribe, to please use the above (extra) subscription form. Any further requests or information shall be promptly complied with.

The Editor...

FROM:

John Howard Society
Collins Bay Chapter
P.O. Box 190
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 4V9



To:

Centre of Criminology Library
130 St. George St. Room 8001
Toronto, Ontario
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